

REMARKS

Amended claim 1 is directed toward the first and second embodiments (Figs. 1-6), in which the return-path speed or refeeding speed is controlled according to the media thickness or stiffness and not according to the image forming transport speed. These embodiments enable the return-path speed to be varied according to the type of media even if the image forming transport speed does not vary according to the type of media.

In the asserted combination of Hino and Johdai, Hino teaches that the image forming transport speed should be varied according to the type of media, and Johdai teaches that the return path speed should be synchronized with the image forming transport speed. Accordingly, in a combination (not admitted obvious) the return path speed can be varied according to the type of media only if the image forming transport speed is also varied according to the type of media.

In an image forming apparatus that does not change the image forming transport speed according to the type of media, the asserted Hino-Johdai combination fails to operate as required by amended claim 1 and does not provide the benefits provided by amended claim 1 (e.g., avoiding paper jams on the return path).

Claim 18 has been rewritten in independent form and should be allowable.

Claim 19, which sets different speeds on different parts of the return path according to their radius of curvature, was rejected over Hino and Johdai, but no reason for the rejection was given. The Applicant cannot find any teaching in Hino or Johdai about using different speeds according to the radius of curvature of different parts of the path.

Respectfully submitted,

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